

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 8, 2008

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 30, 2008

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 5, 2008

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 26, 2007

SENATE BILL

No. 899

Introduced by Senator Simitian

February 23, 2007

An act to add Section 5523 to the Fish and Game Code, relating to fishing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 899, as amended, Simitian. Fishing gear.

(1) Existing law grants to the Fish and Game Commission powers relating to the protection and propagation of fish and game. Existing law establishes the Department of Fish and Game in the Resources Agency, and generally charges the department with the administration and enforcement of the Fish and Game Code. The department administers a commercial fishing licensing program and carries out various other functions relating to fishing. *Existing law establishes the Ocean Protection Council and requires the council, among other things, to coordinate activities of state agencies, that are related to the protection and conservation of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems, and to establish policies to coordinate the collection and sharing of scientific data related to coastal and ocean resources between agencies.*

This bill would require the department, *in collaboration with the council*, by January 1, 2010, to recommend to the commission sustainable funding sources for a program for the prevention of the loss of fishing gear and for the recovery of derelict fishing gear, as defined.

The department would be required, by January 1, 2010, to include on all fishing licenses and in all appropriate official brochures a toll-free telephone number for the purpose of reporting derelict fishing gear and the address for an Internet Web site that maintains a reporting system for derelict fishing gear. The bill, on and after July 1, 2011, would require a person who loses commercial fishing gear, and certain commercial passenger fishing vessels, to report, in the manner prescribed by the department, *in collaboration with the council*, the location at which the fishing gear was lost, the name and fishing identification number of the person owning the fishing gear and of the person fishing with the gear if different than the owner, and the type of lost fishing gear within 48 hours of losing the fishing gear and returning to port. By July 1, 2011, the ~~department~~ *council* would be required to *identify and, if funding is available*, establish and maintain, or support, a database of known derelict fishing gear. The ~~department~~ *council* would be required to take certain action to establish or achieve specified targets for the removal and disposal of derelict fishing gear. On and after July 1, 2011, all traps and trawl nets deployed in the waters of the state would be required to be coded, in the manner prescribed by the department, *in collaboration with the council*, with specified information to aid in the identification of the source of any derelict fishing gear. The bill would provide that, if the department does not have sufficient personnel to carry out any of these provisions, the department would be ~~required~~ *authorized* to contract with appropriate parties for those services if funds are available for that purpose.

Because, under existing law, a violation of these provisions would be a crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

1 (a) Ocean-based sources are a significant source of plastic
2 marine debris, including lost and abandoned “derelict” fishing gear
3 that can be dangerous to wildlife, boaters, and divers.

4 (b) Fishing gear such as commercial and recreational nets, lines,
5 traps, pots, and other fishing equipment that is lost or abandoned
6 may continue to catch marine organisms long after the gear is lost
7 and may threaten sensitive marine habitats and ecosystems.

8 (c) “Ghost fishing,” where marine animals are trapped in lost
9 or abandoned nets or traps, is a leading cause of marine mammal
10 deaths each year.

11 (d) Lost or abandoned nets and gear have been found to drift
12 thousands of miles trapping and killing fish, turtles, seabirds, and
13 other marine life.

14 (e) Marine debris such as derelict fishing gear has impacted at
15 least 267 species worldwide through ingestion and entanglement.

16 (f) Fishing nets and fishing gear are often made from synthetic
17 materials that take a long time to degrade and may never degrade.

18 (g) Lost fishing gear poses a hazard and economic burden for
19 boaters and fishing operations and is a safety hazard for surfers,
20 swimmers, and divers.

21 (h) The California Lost Fishing Gear Recovery Project has
22 developed a strategy to address derelict fishing gear by working
23 cooperatively with fishermen and local leaders for the recovery of
24 gear and the prevention of further gear losses. Through a pilot
25 program for gear removal, the recovery project retrieved nearly
26 10 tons of gear from around the Channel Islands in May 2006.

27 SEC. 2. Section 5523 is added to the Fish and Game Code, to
28 read:

29 5523. (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms
30 have the following meanings:

31 (1) “Commercial fishing gear” means fishing gear used by a
32 commercial fisherman who has a valid, unrevoked commercial
33 fishing license issued pursuant to Section 7850.

34 (2) “Commercial passenger fishing vessel” means a boat from
35 which persons are allowed to sport fish pursuant to a commercial
36 fishing license.

37 (3) “*Council*” means the *Ocean Protection Council*.

38 ~~(3)~~

1 (4) “Derelict fishing gear” means lost or abandoned fishing nets,
2 fishing lines, and other commercial and recreational fishing
3 equipment, and does not include lost or abandoned vessels.

4 ~~(4)~~

5 (5) “Fishing gear” means fishing nets, fishing lines, and other
6 commercial and recreational fishing equipment.

7 (b) The department may apply for, and accept, funds from local,
8 state, federal, and private sources to establish and implement a
9 fishing gear loss prevention and derelict fishing gear recovery
10 program, or to facilitate and support an existing program.

11 (c) The department, *in collaboration with the council*, on or
12 before January 1, 2010, shall recommend to the commission
13 sustainable funding sources for a fishing gear loss prevention and
14 derelict fishing gear recovery program. The recommended funding
15 sources may include the adoption of fees, and the imposition of
16 penalties on persons having significant and chronic gear loss and
17 those not reporting lost gear pursuant to subdivision (e), to assist
18 in defraying the cost of the program.

19 (d) The department, on or before January 1, 2010, shall include
20 the following information on all fishing licenses and in all
21 appropriate official brochures:

22 (1) A toll-free telephone number for the purpose of reporting
23 derelict fishing gear.

24 (2) The address for an Internet Web site that maintains a
25 reporting system for derelict fishing gear.

26 (e) On and after July 1, 2011, a person who loses commercial
27 fishing gear, and a commercial passenger fishing vessel operator
28 on which vessel five or more passengers have lost fishing gear at
29 the same location, within the waters of the state and offshore shall
30 report, in the manner that the department, *in collaboration with*
31 *the council*, shall prescribe, the location at which the fishing gear
32 was lost, including latitude and longitude, the name and fishing
33 identification number of the person owning the fishing gear and
34 of the person fishing with the gear if different than the owner, and
35 the type of lost fishing gear within 48 hours of losing the fishing
36 gear and returning to port.

37 (f) On or before July 1, 2011, ~~the department shall~~ *council shall*
38 *identify and, if funding is available*, establish and maintain, or
39 support, a database of known derelict fishing gear, including the
40 location and type of derelict fishing gear. ~~The department~~ *council*

1 shall identify on ~~its~~ *an* Internet Web site areas in which large
2 amounts of derelict fishing gear have been abandoned.

3 (g) On or before January 1, 2012, and annually thereafter, the
4 ~~department~~ *council* shall prioritize the derelict fishing gear that
5 has been reported and identified for removal and disposal, to
6 achieve the target reductions for derelict fishing gear removal and
7 disposal established by the ~~Ocean Protection Council~~ *council*
8 pursuant to Section 35615 of the Public Resources Code. If, on or
9 before January 1, 2010, the ~~Ocean Protection Council~~ *council* has
10 not established those targets, the department shall establish target
11 reductions for the removal and disposal of derelict fishing gear.

12 (h) On and after July 1, 2011, all traps and trawl nets deployed
13 in waters of the state shall be tagged or coded in the manner that
14 the department, *in collaboration with the council*, shall prescribe
15 with the owner's fishing identification number to aid in the
16 identification of the source of derelict fishing gear.

17 (i) If the department does not have sufficient personnel available
18 to carry out any of the provisions of this section, the department
19 ~~shall~~ *may* contract with appropriate parties for those services if
20 funds are available for that purpose.

21 SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to
22 Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because
23 the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school
24 district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or
25 infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty
26 for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of
27 the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within
28 the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California
29 Constitution.